

# BBC TELEVISION PLAY SYNOPSES

## DR WHO

### Catacombs of Death

An adventure in four parts by Louis Marks

## LORNA DOONE

by R. D. Blackmore

Dramatised in five episodes

For times of transmissions and full details of all BBC programmes see *Radio Times*.

BBC Television Play Synopses for the Deaf are prepared and distributed by the BBC and the Royal National Institute for the Deaf. The synopses are based on the scripts for rehearsals, and viewers should be prepared for slight variations in the final productions. Any inquiries regarding distribution of these synopses should be addressed to The Royal National Institute for the Deaf, 105 Gower Street, London WC1

## DR WHO

### Catacombs of Death

#### EPISODE ONE

Saturday 4 September 1976

Something hits the Tardis and Dr Who realises that it is the Mandragora Helix, a spiral of pure energy which radiates outwards from a living intelligence at its centre. Dr Who and Sarah escape damage to themselves by concentrating their minds but the Tardis is forced to land. It is in Italy in the 15th century, when Italy consists of many independent dukedoms. Count Frederico is returning to the city of San Martino as his brother, the Duke, is dying. The Duke's son Giuliano watches with his friends Marco and other courtiers including the court astrologer, Hieronymous. Giuliano is annoyed that his uncle Frederico did not come earlier to his brother's death-bed and Marco warns Giuliano not to quarrel with his uncle. Giuliano is now Duke, but it is well known that Frederico wants to be Duke and he is a powerful, brutal man with a private army. Giuliano wants to be a modern, humane ruler, not a tyrant as Frederico would be, and not guided by the stars as read by Hieronymous. Marco says that the Duke's death was strange. He was in good health, but Hieronymous said that the stars foretold his death in two days—and he died. Giuliano does not believe in the stars—he is more interested in real science and he shows Marco a new invention (in fact, the telescope). Frederico goes to Hieronymous's study and says that only Giuliano now stands between himself and the Dukedom. Hieronymous must foretell Giuliano's death in two days—Frederico will do the rest! Hieronymous says that he must be patient—there must not be too many sudden deaths. Hieronymous has a strange feeling that his powers are growing. Dr Who and Sarah land in the palace grounds, which seem a pleasant place until Sarah is carried off by some hooded men. Something comes out of the Tardis and trails across the country burning all it touches. Dr Who realises, in horror, that some of the Mandragora Helix energy was trapped in the Tardis and can now destroy the whole Earth! He must control it, but he is captured by Frederico's soldiers. He tries to tell Frederico of the Mandragora danger, but Frederico is incapable of understanding. He thinks Dr Who is an astrologer and gets Hieronymous to question him. Dr Who realises that Hieronymous is an ignorant fake but a dangerous one as there is a bottle of poison on his table. Giuliano comes in and is interested in Dr Who, but Frederico is angry and orders Dr Who's execution. Meanwhile, Sarah is also in great danger—the hooded men take her to their underground temple as a human sacrifice!

#### EPISODE TWO

Saturday 11 September 1976

Dr Who escapes down an underground tunnel and the soldiers chasing him will not follow. They know that it is

an entrance to the catacombs under the city which are used by the Brethren, followers of an ancient religion, Demnos. It is they who have captured Sarah. Dr Who rescues her but, before they can get away, a strange thing happens. The Mandragora energy comes into the temple and makes it grow in size. The Brethren are excited—has their god come back to them? Dr Who tells Sarah that Demnos was an unpleasant Roman religion thought to have died out a thousand years before. Why should the Mandragora Helix be interested in such a petty religion? In the temple a voice speaks to the masked leader of Demnos and says that he has been chosen to have powers beyond anything known, but first he must kill the intruder, Dr Who! The masked leader is Hieronymous, who is overcome by learning of his powers. Sarah and Dr Who are recaptured and taken to Giuliano and Marco. They say that Frederico is plotting to kill Giuliano and seize the Dukedom. Giuliano is not afraid for himself, but Frederico is a tyrant and will cause the people endless suffering. Giuliano realises that Dr Who is a scientist and may be able to explain the death of the soldier killed by the Mandragora energy. Dr Who tells him of the Helix and says that they must now find out why the energy is here and its connection with Demnos. Meanwhile, Frederico tells Hieronymous that Giuliano has invited many dukes and learned men to San Martino to celebrate his accession. When Giuliano is acknowledged as Duke by so many it will be difficult to get rid of him—he must die at once. Hieronymous must use the stars to foretell his death tonight. Hieronymous, full of his secret knowledge of power, says that he cannot do it—but he has poison prepared! Giuliano has difficulty in understanding the advanced science which Dr Who is explaining, but he trusts Dr Who and asks him to investigate. They go secretly to the temple but, as the Mandragora energy may be there, Dr Who goes alone into the temple itself. Frederico's spy sees them and Frederico comes to capture them. Sarah tries to warn Dr Who, but she is trapped by the Mandragora energy—and disappears!

#### EPISODE THREE

Saturday 18 September 1976

Dr Who and Giuliano have a fierce fight with Frederico and are only saved by the Brethren. They hear a Demnos priest asking the masked leader why they should rescue these intruders and Hieronymous says that there must be no killing in the temple when the god is about to disappear. Dr Who realises that the Mandragora Helix is using Demnos to attack Earth. Meanwhile, Sarah is hypnotised by the Mandragora energy which tells her to kill Dr Who with a poisoned brooch. Frederico now sees another way to attack Giuliano—he will tell the visiting Dukes that Giuliano has deserted Christianity and is a follower of Demnos. Frederico captures Marco and tortures him to confess that Giuliano is a Demnos follower, but Marco will not give way. Dr Who

and Giuliano find Sarah but Dr Who soon realises that she is hypnotised and may be dangerous! Frederico's soldiers cannot find Giuliano and say that he must be in the catacombs, which pleases Frederico as it is proof that Giuliano is a Demnos follower. He asks Hieronymous for his support, but Hieronymous is unco-operative. Frederico is angry and orders his men to turn Hieronymous out of the city. Dr Who has realised that Hieronymous is the leader of Demnos and he goes to talk to him. Hieronymous is worried by the visit. He knows that someone is being sent to help him, but is it Dr Who? Sarah tries to kill Dr Who, but he is ready for her and not only saves himself, but wills Sarah to return to her right mind. Hieronymous now knows that Dr Who is against him and tries to kill him. Frederico's soldiers come to take Hieronymous but he escapes and only Dr Who and Sarah are captured and imprisoned with Giuliano and Marco. Frederico comes to see them, but a messenger tells him that the Brethren are collecting in the Temple. Dr Who says that Frederico's time is running out—Mandragora will soon attack. In panic, Frederico goes to the temple and sees the Mandragora light round the masked figure of Hieronymous. Fatally, he tries to attack it.

#### EPISODE FOUR

Saturday 25 September 1976

The Brethren continue their worship of the Mandragora energy, which they think is Demnos. They are, in fact, receiving power from the energy as Dr Who realises. He hurries away and finds that Frederico's soldiers are about to kill Giuliano. He tells them that Frederico is dead and Marco says that now Giuliano can rule with peace and mercy—the evil is over. Dr Who says that a worse evil is just beginning—the Mandragora energy is taking over the Earth. He says that the palace must be strongly fortified. When the Brethren have enough power and attack, the palace must be strong enough to resist them until Dr Who has found a way to overcome the Mandragora energy. Marco reminds Giuliano that his important guests are waiting for the celebrations to begin. Giuliano wants to cancel the festivities, but Marco insists that he must act as if everything were normal and the fancy-dress ball must take place. Dr Who explains that the Mandragora intelligence is not physical in the Earth sense—it acts on people's minds and makes them helpless. But the Mandragora energy which is acting for the intelligence on Earth must have some physical composition. It is being used to give power to the Brethren, so it must be getting used up. Dr Who can only guess what the physical composition can be, but he plans to attack it electrically. Already the Brethren are driving people out of the city. Dr Who must confront the Mandragora energy quickly—but has he guessed rightly and will he be in time?



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# BBC TELEVISION PLAY SYNOPSES

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## DR WHO

### The Hand of Fear

An adventure in four parts by Bob Baker and Dave Martin

### The Deadly Assassin

An adventure in four parts by Robert Holmes

## LORNA DOONE

by R. D. Blackmore

Dramatised in five episodes

## KATY

by Susan Coolidge

Dramatised in four episodes by Constance Chapman

## STRIKER

Second Series by Kenneth Cope

For times of transmissions and full details of all BBC programmes see *Radio Times*.

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## DR WHO

### The Hand of Fear

#### EPISODE ONE

Saturday 2 October 1976

Millions of years ago, on a remote planet, an old commanding voice (King Rokon) orders a technician to blow up a space module and so destroy Eldrad whom he calls a traitor. The technician says that the destruction point is not quite reached but Rokon orders him to act—and he does. Dr Who and Sarah land on Earth—in a quarry. A blast is fired and Sarah is trapped by falling rock. Dr Who and Abbot, boss of the blast gang dig for her and she grasps at whatever hold she can find. She is unconscious when rescued and Dr Who and Abbot are amazed at what she is clinging to—an old fossilised human hand. At the hospital, the doctor cannot unclench Sarah's hand—why? Is it a psychological reaction to fear? Dr Who joins Dr Carter who is examining the fossil hand and he notices that it has a construction unlike human hands. Perhaps it arrived on Earth from an explosion many millions of years ago. It may carry a deadly virus. He must look for more traces of explosion at the quarry. Sarah recovers consciousness and unclenches her hand showing that she is holding a ring. She is clearly under some influence and can use the ring to hypnotise people. She goes to see Carter, transfixes him and takes the hand murmuring 'Eldrad must live.' At the quarry Abbot and Dr Who find nothing else—so is the hand a fossil? Or did it come down from outer space and, if so, from where and why? At the hospital, Carter tells Dr Who how Sarah transfixed him and took the hand. Dr Who thinks that she is under the hand's influence but Carter cannot believe that so dead an object could have any power. They discover that the specimen of the hand has changed. Dr Who thinks that it has absorbed radiation from the electron microscope and is coming alive. Perhaps Sarah, under its influence, is trying to get more radiation to re-make the whole body. Carter says that there is a nuclear power station nearby. If she explodes the nuclear pile, she could destroy the whole country! Hastily they drive to the station. Sarah is there and is making her way to the fission room of the pile.

#### EPISODE TWO

Saturday 9 October 1976

The nuclear station is in a state of emergency and Dr Who explains to the Director why they must find Sarah. Suddenly Carter says a strange thing 'She must live.' The power in the pile is shut down except in the room where Sarah is and she has destroyed the locks. Dr Who talks to Sarah on the intercom and asks what she is doing. She replies, 'Eldrad must live.' Dr Who says that he must go to her through the

cooling duct but the Director says the heat is too intense. Carter must go too and he says, 'She may need help.' It is a perilous journey and as they go Carter says, 'Eldrad must live.' Clearly he too is under the influence and he tries to kill Dr Who but gets killed himself. The Director orders everyone to leave the building and only he remains though he is sure that he will die in the inevitable explosion. Dr Who manages to bring Sarah back. She should be full of radiation but there is none in her—she can remember nothing since the rock fall. Dr Who thinks that the hand is part of a power called Eldrad who is using radiation to come back to life. The hand must be put in a lead box which resists radiation. A technician, Driscoll, gets the hand and all seems safe. But Sarah must have dropped the ring in the fission room. Driscoll goes to get it but, as he goes, says 'Eldrad must live.' Dr Who wonders whether Sarah has completely recovered and he says, 'Eldrad'—she goes again under the influence and says that Eldrad comes from Kastria, which even Dr Who's enormous memory cannot recall. By hypnosis he drives Eldrad's power from Sarah's mind. But meanwhile Driscoll has the hypnotic ring. A guard reports that a strange noise is coming from the box with the hand and Dr Who hurries there. He is too late! Driscoll has the hand and is going towards the fission room!

#### EPISODE THREE

Saturday 16 October 1976

Outside the station, Dr Who, Sarah and the Director wait for the terrible explosion. Nothing happens! Dr Who realises that the hand is using the nuclear power to re-create its body—the real danger is only beginning! The Director re-acts as Earth people do—this unknown thing must be destroyed. He orders the Air Force to attack the station. The planes attack—and the building is unharmed. The Director cannot believe it—the weapons are the most powerful known to man. The hand is using their power, says Dr Who, and now the only weapon is the most ancient—diplomacy and talk. He must talk to the hand and he goes into the building. Sarah insists on going also. They meet the re-created body of Eldrad, a man but with a woman's appearance. Eldrad can pierce their minds to find out if they are telling the truth. He says that they plan to destroy him but Dr Who says that they have tried to save him. They will help if he tells them what he wants. He tells them that Kastria was a beautiful planet and he created its beauty. But other planet people fought to get it and his jealous rival, Rokon, ordered his destruction as a traitor. He had foreseen this and built an underground world in which the Kastrians could live until he could re-create himself. This had happened and now he must return. He knows that Dr Who is a Time Lord and

Time Lords must fight aggression wherever they find it. Dr Who agrees and says that Eldrad can return to Kastria in the Tardis. Eldrad orders him to go back in time to the period of his apparent destruction but Dr Who cannot do this as it will break a Time Lord Law—history must not be altered. He can only take Eldrad back in the present—Eldrad is forced to agree. Dr Who also prevents Eldrad from killing the Director. They go to Kastria which is a freezing desert. But there are Kastrians underground, says Eldrad, whom he can free and with the ring he opens the door—his enemies have set a trap for him!

#### EPISODE FOUR

Saturday 23 October 1976

Eldrad manages to tell Dr Who that he can only be restored in the regenerating room. He points the way and Dr Who and Sarah carry him hurriedly as he is already breaking up. The way is terribly dangerous and, at one point, they cross a bottomless chasm. All the time, the voice of Rokon sounds through the loudspeakers that the intruders must be destroyed. At last they reach the regenerating room but they may be too late as Eldrad seems to break into dust. Then the door opens and the regenerated Eldrad appears—now a man and clearly evil! He laughs at Rokon's efforts—he himself prepared this and Rokon cannot destroy him. Rokon says that Eldrad has won nothing but defeat. Eldrad says that now he has power again and can restore Kastria to its former glory. Then he can start on his real aim—to conquer the Universe. Dr Who and Sarah realise that they have been deceived. Eldrad is not a good man overcome by enemies but an evil ambitious conqueror who has lied to get their help. Eldrad goes to Rokon's throne but there is nothing there. Rokon has tricked him—his voice is a recording. Eldrad is cheated of his revenge. But now he can be King of Kastria. He says that his story of the Kastrians living underground is untrue. He put them to sleep until he returned to regenerate them. He goes to where he left his people but there is nothing there. By opening the door he starts a film which shows Rokon speaking to him. Rokon says that he and the Kastrians feared that Eldrad might return. Rather than be subjects of so wicked a creature they chose death. Eldrad is enraged—his plans for Kastria are defeated. He must find another planet as good—he will take Earth. Dr Who, he says, must take him back but Dr Who refuses. Dr Who and Sarah must now escape to the Tardis and, in following them, Eldrad is destroyed. As they travel in the Tardis, Dr Who hears a sound—it is a summons from the Time Lords. Sarah realises that her time with him is now over. Momentarily he lands the Tardis on Earth and Sarah walks away to her normal life.

#### DR WHO

The Deadly Assassin

#### EPISODE ONE

Saturday 30 October 1976

Gallifrey, the planet of the Time Lords, has been peaceful for thousands of years but suddenly it faces its greatest danger. Dr Who, travelling towards it in the Tardis, has a kind of vision that the President of the Time Lords is assassinated. He lands near the Assembly buildings, the Panopticon, and finds that the President is due to resign that day and to declare his successor at a great ceremony. Dr Who realises that his vision may come true and he must warn the President. But guards, led by Officer Spandrell, are suspicious of the Tardis and Dr Who must escape from them. He leaves a warning message in the Tardis. Spandrell and other officers get the record of this now very old-fashioned Tardis and its owner and find that he is a criminal! His crime has been forgiven at the intervention of the C.I.A. (Celestial Intervention Agency) and he was banished to Earth. He belongs to a Time Lord group called Prydonian whose leader at this time, Goth, is one of those who may be named President. Goth cannot believe that a Prydonian would wish to harm the President but he agrees that Dr Who must be found and held. They also discover that Dr Who's biographical record has been looked at recently—by whom? By various tricks, Dr Who gets into the Panopticon and as he goes, a shadowy figure passes him and says 'Predictable as ever, Doctor!'—whose voice is it? He greets the commentator, Runcible, who is describing the ceremony on television. Runcible is annoyed because he cannot make contact with one of the cameramen. Dr Who sees that there is a gun beside the camera, just as he saw in his vision. He hurries to it but there is nobody there. He sees something threatening on the assembly hall floor and fires at it. To his horror the President falls dead!